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(54) Vehicle door lock actuator

(57) Remotely controlled power operable lock actuator mechanism for vehicle doors seen in Figure 1, comprises a main power driven locking lever 10 rocking between locked and unlocked condition and a T shaped output lever 16 one arm of which has a longitudinal slot 26. Co-axial with lever 16 is a drive input lever 28 operated by the interior door handle and having a slot 30 with

a lateral extension 30b. A drive dog pin 32 is received in both slots and can be shifted longitudinally thereof by a superlocking power actuator 40 to disable drive connection between the levers by positioning the dog in the slot extension 30b. An overriding link 42 with lost motion connection between dog 32 and main lever 10 enables manual cancellation of superlocking if power fails.

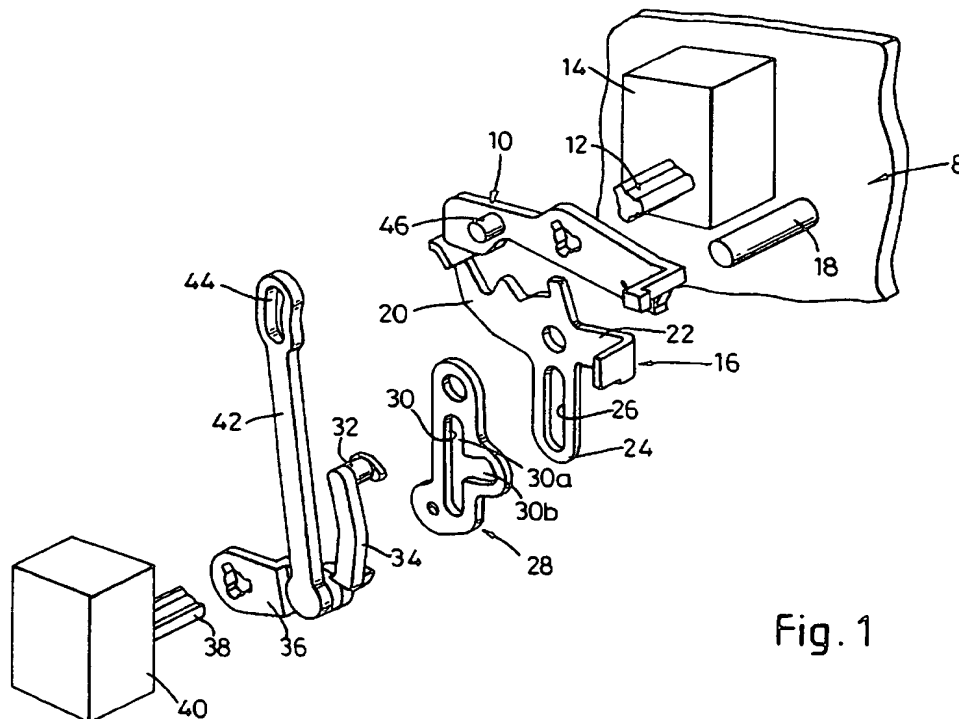


Fig. 1

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Description

This invention relates to lock actuator mechanism for doors and other closures of vehicles. It has particular but not exclusive application to actuator mechanisms forming part of locking systems of the kind in which the individual locks are power operable and interconnected through a central control unit for electrical actuation whereby locking or unlocking of all doors can be effected from a single control station operable from within or outside the vehicle, herein referred to as "central locking systems".

More specifically the invention relates to mechanism providing a superlocking facility whereby the latch of the door operatively associated with the particular mechanism cannot be freed from a locked condition even if access is gained to the interior door handle or other manual actuating elements within the vehicle, for example in attempting unauthorised intrusion by breaking a window or probing into or through the door.

The object of the invention is to provide actuator mechanism having a remotely controllable powered or other superlocking facility which is convenient and reliable in operation, of simple and durable construction, which can readily be provided by modification of existing patterns of latch and locking assemblies, and which enables authorized access to the vehicle even if powered operation should break down or fail, for example if the vehicle has been left locked and parked and the battery has gone flat.

According to the invention there is provided vehicle door lock actuator mechanism including

(a) a housing or other mounting formation;

(b) a drive input lever fulcrummed on said formation and having operative connection to an interior manually actuable element (e.g. an interior door handle) selectively operable to shift said lever about its fulcrum axis between first and second angular positions;

(c) a driven output lever having operative connection with latching means whereby displacement of the output lever from a first to a second angular position releases the door from a latched condition in use;

(d) coupling means comprising a drive dog having connection with one of said levers so that it is positively displaced on angular movement thereof and engaging a drive formation of the other of said levers extending longitudinally of an arm thereof and having a portion shaped to permit relative movement between the dog and said arm laterally of the latter;

(e) a powered superlocking actuator co-acting with

the drive dog and selectively operable to shift the dog longitudinally of said lever arm between an engaged position at which the dog couples the levers for angular movement in unison, and a lost motion superlocking position at which the dog is aligned with said portion so that angular movement of the input lever between its first and second positions is not transmitted to the output lever for releasing the latch;

(f) a main locking lever or other main locking element selectively driven by a main power actuator between a locked condition at which the associated latch is secured against release and an unlocked position freeing the latch for release;

(g) exterior manually actuable but key controlled release means selectively operable to shift said locking element to the unlocked condition independently of said main actuator; and

(h) overriding means linking the locking element directly or indirectly with the drive dog whereby if the latter has been set to the superlocking position it will be drawn to the engaged position upon actuation of the locking element from the locked to the unlocked condition independently of the superlocking actuator.

Conveniently the output lever is fulcrummed on the mounting formation co-axially with the input lever and an arm of the output lever is in substantially face to face relationship with an arm of the input lever when both levers are at the same angular position, the drive dog engaging drive formations extending longitudinally of both arms and being shifted therealong by the superlocking actuator.

The overriding means conveniently includes a link coupled to an element carrying the drive dog or itself carrying the latter and having lost motion connection with an arm or other portion of the main locking lever or other main locking element.

An example of the invention is now more particularly described with reference to the accompanying drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of components of a lock actuator mechanism;

Figures 2-5 are elevations of said components in their assembled relationship and showing them in a sequence of different operating positions, and Figure 6 is a like elevation of a modified form of said components.

The mechanism described will be incorporated into a vehicle door latch and locking assembly of known kind having remotely controlled power operation as part of a central locking system of the vehicle. Only such parts of

the latching and locking mechanisms of the assembly as are necessary to the understanding of these examples of the invention are here described and shown in the drawings.

The assembly will include latching means (not shown) releasably retaining the door at the closed position, the latching means being released for opening the door by the operation of interior or exterior door handles (not shown).

Said assembly includes a mounting formation 8 (shown only in part in Fig.1) locating its various components and constructed to form a housing substantially containing and protecting them both from ingress of dirt and from any unauthorised probing or other access with a view to tampering with the mechanism.

Referring now to Figures 1-5 of the drawings said assembly includes lock actuator mechanism having a main locking lever 10 secured on a drive shaft 12 of a main powered actuator 14 (Fig.1) incorporating an electric drive motor. Actuator 14 is selectively operated from the central system to shift lever 10 angularly between a locked position shown in Figures 2 and 4 with its arms generally horizontal, and an unlocked position shown in Figures 3 and 5 rotated clockwise by about 30° from the locked position. Lever 10 is connected for actuation of the locking mechanism of the assembly in known manner.

A generally T-shaped drive output lever 16 is fulcrumed on a fixed pivot 18 spaced below locking lever 10 as viewed in the drawings and has a pair of generally horizontal arms 20, 22 and a third generally vertical arm 24 extending downwards from its fulcrum.

Arm 24 includes a longitudinal drive formation in the form of a parallel sided slot 26.

Fulcrumed co-axially with lever 16 on pivot 18 is a drive input lever 28 extending generally vertically from pivot 18 so that its major part is in face to face relationship with slotted arm 24. The distal end of lever 28 is connected to the interior door handle, actuation of the latter causing angular displacement of lever 28 through a linkage (not shown).

Lever 28 also includes a drive formation in the form of an L-shaped slot 30 having a vertical upper limb 30a co-incident with the upper part of slot 26 in arm 24 when levers 16 and 28 are at the same angular position, and a generally horizontal limb 30b forming a slot portion which extends laterally to the right as viewed in the drawings.

A headed pin forms a drive dog 32 which is engaged through both lever slots 26 and 30. Dog 32 is carried on the upper end of a superlocking link 34, its lower end being pivotally connected to the distal end of a superlocking lever 36. The proximal end of lever 36 is secured on a drive shaft 38 of a superlocking powered actuator 40 (Figure 1) also incorporating an electric drive motor selectively operated from the central system for angular movement of lever 36 between an upper engaged position, shown in Figures 2, 3 and 5, and a lower lost motion

superlocking position shown in Figure 4.

In the latter position dog 32 is shifted downwardly to co-act with the lower portions of slots 26 and 30. In this position the horizontal limb 30b of slot 30 permits angular movement of drive input lever 28 without any motion being transmitted to output lever 16, thus rendering the interior door handle inoperative by disabling its drive connection to the latch mechanism.

This superlocked condition prevents the door being opened from the inside when the vehicle is otherwise locked. In this particular application there is no sill button or other manually operable element on the inside of the door for locking or unlocking the related assembly, this can only be effected from the inside by powered operation.

Normally powered operation will suffice for all operating conditions; the central locking system enables locking and unlocking of some or all of the vehicle doors from the outside, typically by a hand-held remote control device of known kind emitting a coded infra-red or ultrasonic signal to a pick-up on the vehicle body, the central system ensuring that all the doors and/or other closures are secured and superlocked with corresponding cancellation unlocking the mechanism when a door is to be opened.

Failure of the central locking system might occur, most commonly due to the vehicle being left parked and locked and the battery going flat (e.g. if lights have inadvertently been left switched on) or, more rarely, due to failure or malfunctioning of electrical components of the system. Hence provision is made for at least one door on the vehicle to be unlocked manually in such emergency, independently of its power actuation, from the vehicle exterior as by providing a conventional key-operated lock cylinder linked to the main locking lever 10, operation by the key displacing lever 10 from its locked to its unlocked position.

This emergency manual operation would not in itself remove the superlocking setting referred to above as actuator 40 will remain inoperative as well as actuator 14.

The mechanism further includes overriding means for manual cancelling of superlocking, linking main locking lever 10 to drive dog 32.

In the example illustrated in Figures 1-5 the overriding means comprises an overriding link 42 pivotally connected at a lower end to the lower end of superlocking link 34 by co-axial connection with the distal end of superlocking lever 36.

The upper end of link 42 has an arcuate slot 44 extending in a generally longitudinal direction and engaged by a pin 46 mounted near the end of the left hand arm of main lever 10.

Slot 44 provides lost motion connection between lever 10 and link 42 so that drive dog 32 is not displaced from its engaged position (superlocking off) by locking and unlocking movement of lever 10. However, if dog 32 has been drawn down to its superlocking position as

shown in Figure 4 movement of lever 10 from the locked position there shown will draw overriding link 42 upwards and shift dog 32 to its engaged position as shown in Fig. 5, so connecting the drive between lever 28 and 16. Thus the superlocking is cancelled without any power drive input from actuator 40.

Figure 6 illustrates a modified construction in which the separate superlocking and overriding links 34 and 42 are replaced by a single dual purpose link 50 having a lower end pivotally connected to superlocking lever 36, carrying drive dog 32 on a median part, and having its upper end in co-acting relationship with pin 46 on lever 10. Said upper end defines a rectangular cut-out 52 in place of the more confined slot 44 of link 42 to allow the necessary side to side angular movement of link 50 giving the lateral freedom of relative movement of dog 32 in its superlocking condition.

In another modified construction the drive formation of input lever 28 may be a longitudinal slot with a lower portion of one side wall, to the right as viewed in the drawings, completely removed so that the lost motion on superlocking is provided by dog 32 being able to enter and leave that slot laterally while remaining captive in slot 26 of arm 24.

It will be understood that the drive formation which includes a portion shaped to permit relative lateral movement between the drive dog and the related lever arm could be provided in the arm of the output lever 16, while the arm of the input lever 28 has a simple longitudinal extending slot or other drive formation.

Instead of the separate main and superlocking power actuators with individual drive motors a single actuator having a dual drive output might be used, or a single drive output might be employed for sequential locking and superlocking as by shifting an element to a first position for locking and driving it on to a further position to shift the drive dog for superlocking.

Claims

1. Vehicle door lock actuator mechanism including:

(a) a housing or other mounting formation (8);

(b) a drive input lever (28) fulcrummed on said formation and having operative connection to an interior manually actuatable element selectively operable to shift said lever about its fulcrum axis between first and second angular positions;

(c) a driven output lever (16) having operative connection with latching means whereby displacement of the output lever from a first to a second angular position releases the door from a latched condition in use;

characterised in that said mechanism further includes.

(d) coupling means comprising a drive dog (32) having connection with one of said levers so that it is positively displaced on angular movement thereof and engaging a drive formation (30) of the other of said levers extending longitudinally of an arm thereof and having a portion (30b) shaped to permit relative movement between the dog and said arm laterally of the latter;

(e) a powered superlocking actuator (40) co-acting with the drive dog and selectively operable to shift the dog longitudinally of said lever arm between an engaged position at which the dog couples the levers for angular movement in unison, and a lost motion superlocking position at which the dog is aligned with said portion so that angular movement of the input lever between its first and second positions is not transmitted to the output lever for releasing the latch;

(f) a main locking lever or other main locking element (10) selectively driven by a main power actuator (14) between a locked condition at which the associated latch is secured against release and an unlocked position freeing the latch for release;

(g) exterior manually actuatable but key controlled release means selectively operable to shift said locking element to the unlocked condition independently of said main actuator; and

(h) overriding means (42) linking the locking element directly or indirectly with the drive dog whereby if the latter has been set to the superlocking position it will be drawn to the engaged position upon actuation of the locking element from the locked to the unlocked condition independently of the superlocking actuator.

2. Mechanism as in Claim 1 characterised in that the output lever (16) is fulcrummed on the mounting formation co-axially with the input lever (28) and an arm of the output lever is in substantially face to face relationship with an arm of the input lever when both levers are at the same angular position, the drive dog (32) engaging drive formations (26,30) extending longitudinally of both arms and being shifted therealong by the superlocking actuator (40).

3. Mechanism as in Claim 1 or Claim 2 characterised in that the overriding means includes a link (42) coupled to an element (34) carrying the drive dog or itself carrying the latter and having lost motion con-

nection with an arm or other portion of the main locking lever or other main locking element (10).

4. Mechanism as in Claim 1 or 2 characterised in that the drive dog (32) is carried on a link (50) shifted by the superlocking actuator (40), said link also acting as the overriding means by being provided with a formation (52) coacting with the locking element (10).
5. Mechanism as in any preceding Claim characterised in that both the superlocking actuator (40) and the main actuator (14) are powered by a common drive motor.

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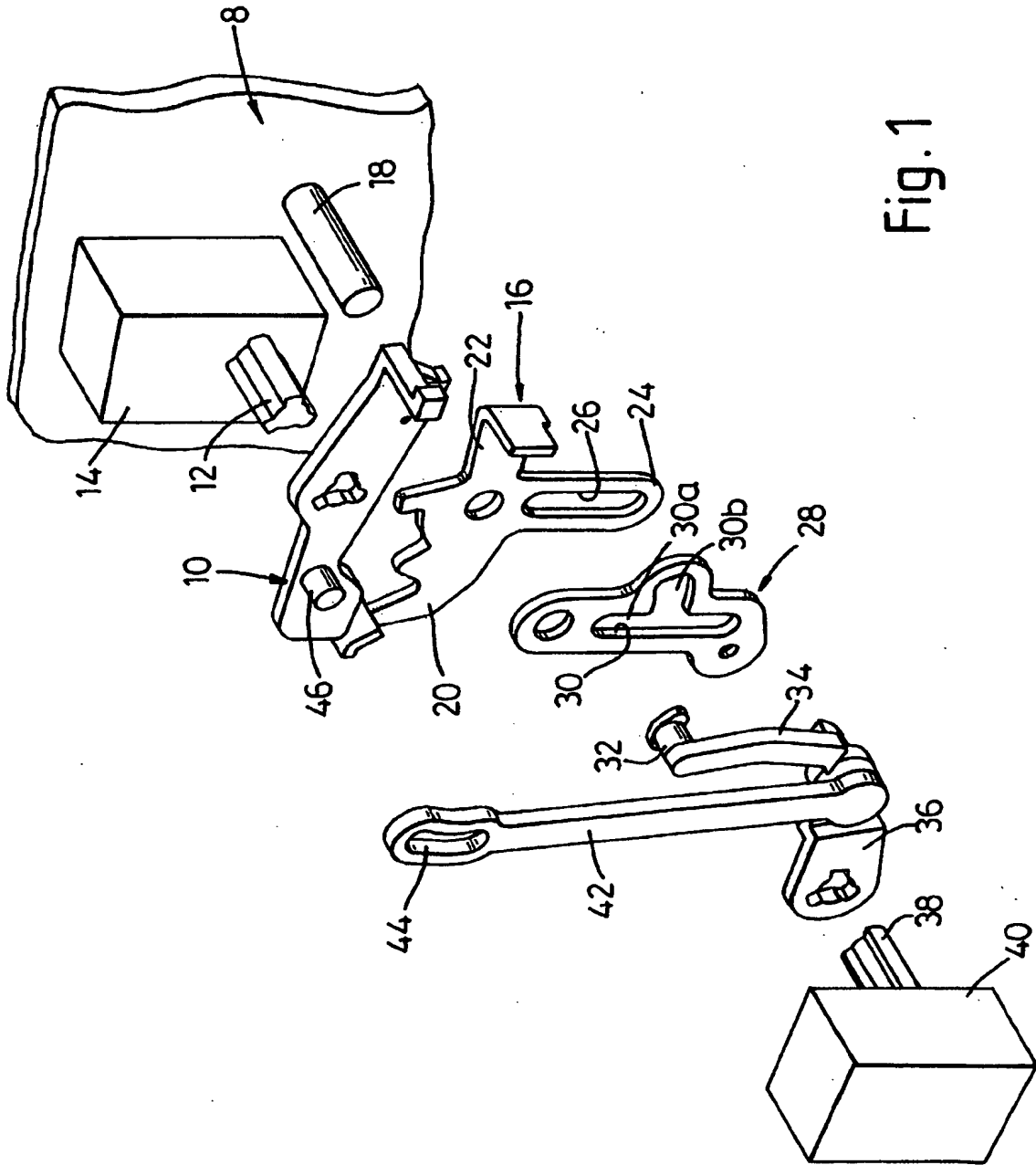


Fig. 1

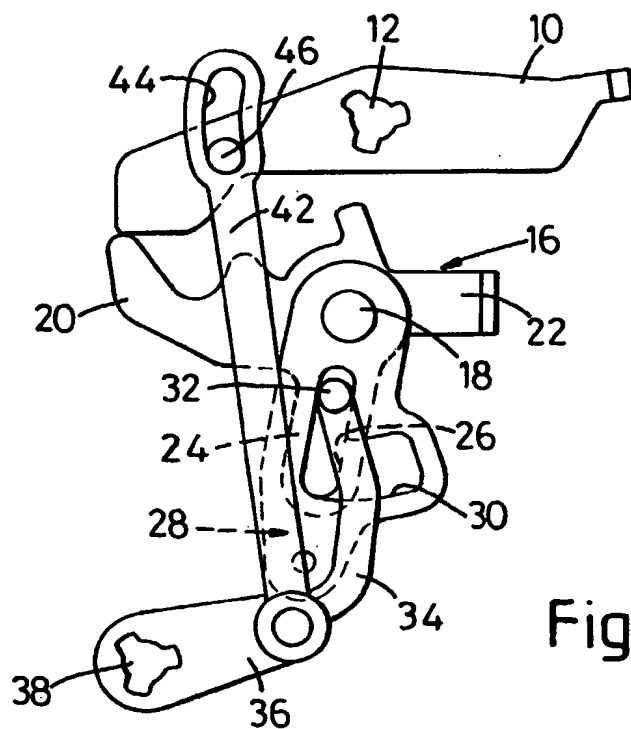


Fig. 2

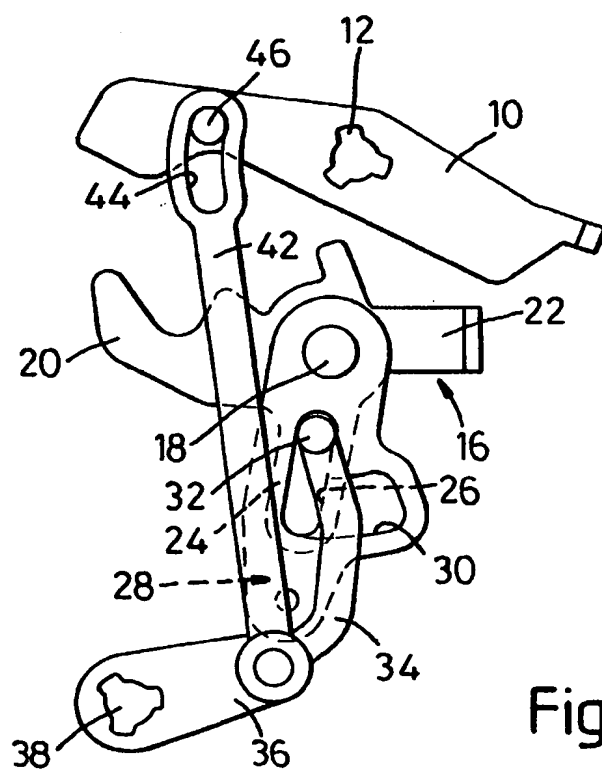


Fig. 3

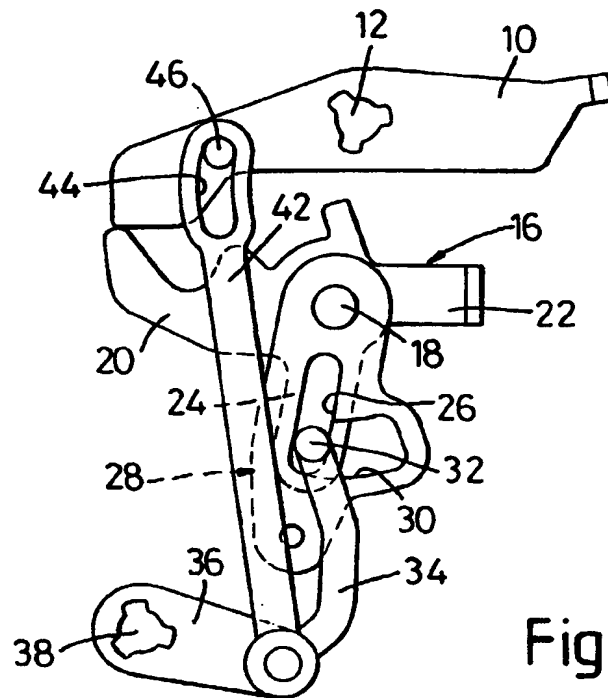


Fig. 4

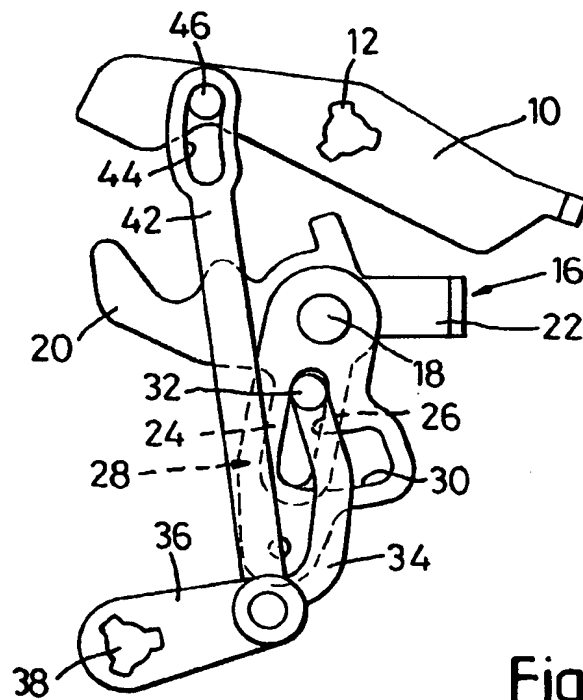


Fig. 5

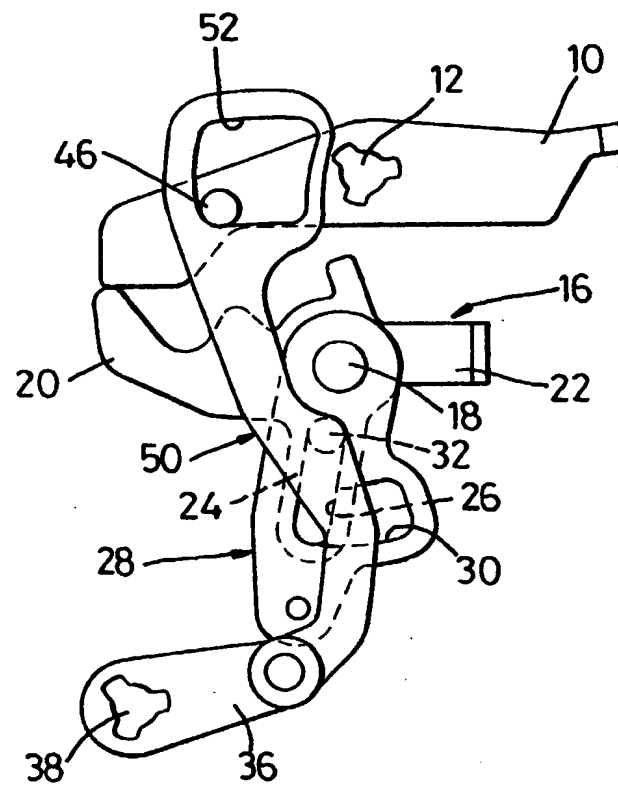


Fig. 6



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 96 30 6845

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	DE 295 11 451 U (BOMORO BOCKLENBERG & MOTTE GMBH & CO KG) * the whole document *	1-3,5	E05B47/00 E05B65/20 E05B65/36
X	EP 0 342 099 A (ROCKWELL-CIM) * the whole document *	1,5	
A	US 4 334 704 A (YAMADA) * figure 5 *	3,4	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			E05B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 30 January 1997	Examiner Westin, K
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